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1. INTRODUCTION

Influencer Marketing

Influencer marketing is a form of social media marketing that involves collaborating with professional influencers who publicly endorse your brand. This helps to develop the business and reach a larger audience.

On top of the immense power that influencers hold, Global Web Index found that 40% of internet users use ad-blocking software, meaning a big chunk of consumers don't even see the ads brands pay for. Working with influencers provides an effective solution in the age of the ad blocker, as consumers learn about products through content that is native to where they already are — social media.

Influencer-generated content (IGC) is quick and cost-effective to produce. Not to mention, it is authentic, relatable, and diverse, which is why it consistently performs better than studio-shot creative. Brands can leverage it on their websites, social campaigns, emails, print ads, or even in-store displays.

Who are Influencers?

Influencers are characterized by a large number of loyal and dedicated social media followers. They are perceived as experts in their niches and their recommendations are often highly regarded by their followers.

What distinguishes influencers from traditional celebrities is that the former share a strong rapport with their fan communities. They harness the accessibility of social media to establish personal connections with and gain the trust of their followers.

Influencers are often real-life consumers who have in-depth knowledge about certain subjects. This gives them certain leverage and empowers them to motivate their followers to take desired actions.

Types of Influencers

Nano-influencers: Between 1K and 10K followers. Because of their reduced following, nano-influencers are usually able to engage consistently with their audience. While they may be less

experienced than professional influencers, their content is typically more authentic and focuses on a niche topic.

Micro-influencers: Between 10K and 100K followers. Although they have more followers, they usually manage to maintain a relatively high level of engagement. They are also more likely to have a targeted audience focused on a particular niche.

Macro-influencers: Between 100K and 1M followers. These profiles tend to have a much broader appeal and often include social media stars, bloggers, vloggers, and podcasters. These influencers also have a much greater reach. However, due to the sheer size of their audience, they are unlikely to have a high engagement rate.

Mega-influencers: Over 1M followers. These include celebrities, rising stars, and KOLs (key opinion leaders). Because they have such a strong social status, their recommendations tend to be listened to. However, they are less likely to be engaged with their followers or specialized in a particular niche or industry.

Evolution of Influencer Marketing Services

AI and machine learning are transforming influencer marketing services in India. These technologies make influencer marketing agency services more accurate in targeting and engaging audiences. AI analyses trends and personalises content, boosting the impact of influencer marketing services in India. There is also a shift from focusing on many influencers to choosing ones with smaller, more engaged followings. Though fewer followers, Nano and micro-influencers often see higher engagement rates. They create more genuine connections and provide impactful endorsements.

The demand for measurable outcomes from influencer marketing companies in India drives this shift. These companies employ advanced analytics to improve their strategies in a competitive landscape. The growth of influencer marketing and social media marketing also underscores the need to pick the right platforms carefully. Deciding which social media platform is best for influencer marketing is crucial. It depends on where specific influencers can most effectively reach their audiences. These changes ensure that influencer marketing remains an essential and adaptive tool in digital marketing. It continuously evolves to meet new market demands and opportunities.

Growth of Influencer Marketing in India

Influencer marketing has emerged as a new and impactful phenomenon in the Indian advertising space. In the evolving digitalisation era, brands are increasing their focus on popular influencers which have a great command on drawing attention of the online audience. This upcoming trend is a dramatic shift on how brands connect with consumers in the digital era. This in return leads the Indian influencer marketing space towards rapid growth, impact, and future trajectory. A shift in consumer behaviour and technological advancements are some of the main reasons for the current state of influencer marketing being a powerhouse in the advertising industry.

In today's world, influencer marketing has emerged as an impactful tool for brands to connect with their audience authentically. Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and other social media platforms have enabled influencers to reach and influence their followers. To build rapport and credibility with the audience, brands are collaborating with influencers to enhance the market position of their products or services. One of the primary causes for change in the dynamics of consumer interaction and advertising is a significant increase in influencer marketing in recent years. With the emergence of short video platforms and having a user base of 65% of non-metropolitan areas, consumption of content has taken a new route of expansion. The rise of affordable smartphones and data plans has made access to social media easy, helping individuals from various backgrounds to build an influence online.

India's influencer marketing industry is estimated to reach Rs. 3,375 crore (US$ 404.82 million) by 2026, expanding at a CAGR of 18% over 2022-26, as per a report from Ernst and Young (EY).

Influencer Marketing **Companies in India**

The growth of influencer marketing companies in India has been significant. The increasing importance of social media and digital strategies fuels this surge. As brands aim to reach more diverse audiences, the demand for specialized influencer marketing agency services has increased. These agencies help brands boost their reach and engagement through effective influencer and social media marketing.

However, influencer marketing companies in India face several challenges. The market is becoming saturated, making it hard for agencies to stand out without unique strategies. Regulatory changes in digital advertising also pose a challenge, requiring agencies to adapt quickly to stay compliant. Furthermore, deciding which social media platform is best for influencer marketing has become more complex. The effectiveness of platforms varies greatly depending on the audience and content type. To stay competitive, influencer marketing companies must be agile and innovative. They need to refine their strategies and embrace new technologies continually. This adaptability helps them overcome obstacles and make the most of the opportunities available through influencer marketing services in India.

By doing so, they remain leaders in digital marketing, driving influencer campaigns' success and expansions. To stay competitive, influencer marketing companies must be agile and innovative. They need to refine their strategies and embrace new technologies continually. This adaptability helps them overcome obstacles and make the most of the opportunities available through influencer marketing services in India. By doing so, they remain leaders in digital marketing, driving influencer campaigns' success and expansion.

Influencer Marketing & Consumer Behaviour

A decade ago, the influencer marketing arena was limited only to celebrities and a few dedicated bloggers, whereas now, social media influencers are abound across all social networks. Their followings may vary in size, but these influencers pack a punch. Their tight-knit communities foster authentic connections and influence purchase behaviors, leading to higher brand engagement and ultimately, sales.

In the digital age, influencer marketing has emerged as a powerful strategy for brands to connect with their target audience. Influencers, individuals with a significant following on social media platforms, wield the power to influence consumer behavior through authentic and relatable content. This research study explores the impact of influencer marketing on consumer buying behavior, shedding light on how it shapes purchasing decisions, brand perceptions, and overall consumer attitudes.

1. Building Trust and Authenticity:

Influencers are seen as trustworthy figures by their followers due to the personal nature of their content. As a result, when an influencer promotes a product or service, consumers are more likely to perceive it as authentic and reliable. This trust fosters a positive association between the brand and the consumer, leading to increased brand loyalty.

2. Enhanced Brand Awareness:

Influencer marketing can significantly amplify a brand's reach and exposure. By collaborating with influencers who have a relevant and engaged audience, brands can quickly gain visibility among potential consumers who might not have been reached through traditional advertising channels. Increased brand awareness directly impacts consumer behavior by putting the brand on the consumer's radar.

3. Social Proof and FOMO:

The phenomenon of social proof plays a crucial role in influencing consumer behavior. When consumers observe their favorite influencers using and endorsing a product, it creates a sense of trust and validation. This social proof can lead to a Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) effect, driving consumers to make impulsive purchases to be part of the trend and share similar experiences as their favorite influencers.

4. Targeted Marketing:

Influencers often have a niche audience with specific interests and demographics. Brands can leverage influencer marketing to precisely target their ideal consumer base. By selecting influencers who align with the brand's values and target market, marketers can enhance the effectiveness of their campaigns, leading to higher engagement and conversion rates.

5. User-Generated Content and Engagement:

Influencer marketing often involves user-generated content (UGC), where influencers create authentic content featuring the brand's products or services. UGC is highly effective in engaging consumers as it feels more relatable and less like traditional advertising. This engagement fosters a sense of community among consumers, encouraging them to share their experiences with the brand and create a positive feedback loop.

6. Impact on Purchase Decisions:

Studies indicate that influencer marketing can sway purchase decisions. Consumers are more likely to consider a product or service recommended by an influencer they follow and trust. The emotional connection established through influencer content can drive consumers to prioritize these products over alternatives, ultimately leading to an increase in sales.

Indian Cosmetic Market

Cosmetics refer to substances or products, including makeup, skincare items, hair care products, and fragrances, that individuals use to enhance or alter their appearance. Cosmetics come in various forms, such as creams, lotions, powders, and sprays, and are often designed to provide aesthetic enhancement. Generally, cosmetics are products that are used for cleaning and taking care of the body to show it more gorgeous. The preliminary objective of using cosmetic products is to maintain the body in perfect state, protect it against environmental factors and to diminish ageing signs as much as possible. It is used for changing the appearance and makes the body smell nicer. Therefore, these products are utilized for beautifying, cleansing, promoting attractiveness, conditioning skin; coloring, lips, hair, eyes and nails are included in cosmetics and represented as Cosmetics and Toiletries. The cosmetic market comprises a huge scale of skin care, health-care, hair-care, fragrances, make-up, baby-care, color cosmetics, oral care and so on. The cosmetics are partitioned into two categories:

- Premium cosmetics

- Personal and beauty care products

The classification of these personal and beauty care cosmetic products is given as follows:

a) Child care and bathing products

The child care products are applied over the soft bodies of babies and toddlers at the age of 0-3 years. Also, kids less than 5 years old can also use these products. Alike of this, bathing products include bath additives, bar soap, shower/body wash gels, instant wipes, intimate washes, talcum powders and liquid soap.

b) Coloring and perfumes/Deodorants cosmetics

It includes foundations, rouge, lip sticks, face powder, kajal blushers, face bronzers, highlights and 2-way cake products. These are pump, per-spirant creams, roll-on, stick, spray and wipe format.

c) Fragrances/Depilatories

It includes women/man products, premium and uni-sex mass fragrances. The distinction among premium and mass market is generally label, price, and premium positioning (mass fragrances for carrying designer labels) and distributions. Depilatories are a combination of women's razors, pre-shave items, blades, razors, bleachers and hair removers.

d) Hair coloring

It is a combination of styling agents, shampoos, perms, color tubes, relaxants and perms, color tubes, developers and salon hair care. Oral-care and Men's grooming It includes tooth-brushes, tooth-paste, dental rinses or mouth washes, mouth fresheners, home teeth whiteners and dental floss. Men‟s grooming includes men‟s toiletries and shaving products.

e) Sun and skin-care products

Sun-care products include after-sun, self-tanning and sun-protection products. Similarly, skin-care includes body and facial care products, hand care products.

The cosmetics industry encompasses a wide range of products, catering to diverse preferences and needs for personal care and grooming. With increased financial capacity, the middle-class demographic allocates more resources to personal grooming and beauty products. This surge in purchasing power prompts a growing demand for cosmetics, including skincare, makeup, and hair care items.

As consumers seek to enhance their appearance and well-being, the beauty industry experiences a corresponding boost, making India an increasingly lucrative market for cosmetic brands. The rising middle-class affluence not only amplifies individual spending on personal care but also contributes substantially to the overall expansion of the cosmetics sector in the country.

For instance, in September 2023, according to a BMI report, India's consumer market is set to become the world's third largest by 2027 as the number of middle to high-income households rises.

India's Cosmetic Market is segmented by type, gender, distribution channel and region. Based on type, the market is classified as skin & sun care products, hair care products, deodorants & fragrances and others. Skin & sun care products dominated the market in 2022 with a market share of 40% and are expected to keep their dominance during the forecast period 2024-2032.

Skin and sun care products play a pivotal role in propelling the Indian cosmetic market. With increasing awareness of skincare and a growing emphasis on wellness, consumers in India seek effective solutions for sun protection and skincare.

The demand for products offering UV protection, anti-aging benefits, and natural ingredients has surged. Factors such as changing lifestyles, exposure to pollution, and a rising consciousness about the harmful effects of UV radiation contribute to this trend.

Beauty brands in India are responding with innovative formulations and marketing strategies to cater to diverse skincare needs, contributing significantly to the overall growth and dynamism of the cosmetic market in the country.

Based on gender, the market is classified into men, women and unisex. Women dominated the market in 2022 with a market share of 60% and are expected to keep their dominance during the forecast period 2024-2032. Women play a pivotal role in propelling the Indian cosmetic market.

With increasing empowerment and changing societal norms, there is a growing emphasis on personal grooming and beauty among women. The expanding urban middle class, rising disposable incomes, and exposure to beauty trends contribute to a surge in demand for cosmetics.

The influence of social media and beauty influencers has further propelled awareness and demand for trendy and international beauty standards. The rise in working women, coupled with a desire for self-expression, fuelled the demand for cosmetics, skincare, and hair care products.

Women’s preferences for diverse beauty products, skincare regimes, and makeup drive market growth, making them influential drivers shaping the dynamics of the vibrant and evolving cosmetics industry in India.

Based on distribution channel, the market is classified into hypermarkets/supermarkets, specialty stores, pharmacies, online sales channels and others. Specialty stores dominated the market in 2022 with a market share of 30% and are expected to keep their dominance during the forecast period 2024-2032.

Specialty stores play a pivotal role in driving the Indian cosmetic market by providing a dedicated platform for consumers to explore and purchase a diverse range of beauty products. These stores offer an immersive and curated shopping experience, allowing customers to access a variety of brands and specialized products in one location.

The personalized assistance and expertise are available in specialty stores contribute to informed purchasing decisions, creating a dynamic retail environment that fosters the growth of the cosmetic market in India.

Moreover, specialty stores often serve as platforms for product demonstrations and beauty consultations, enhancing the overall shopping experience. As these stores continue to adapt to evolving beauty trends and consumer demands, their presence and influence significantly contribute to the growth and dynamism of the cosmetics market in India.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Influencer marketing has emerged as a prominent strategy in the cosmetics industry in India; however, it is not without its challenges. One significant issue is the authenticity of endorsements, as many influencers promote products they may not genuinely use or believe in, leading to consumer skepticism and potential damage to brand credibility. Furthermore, the regulatory landscape surrounding influencer marketing remains ambiguous, often resulting in misleading endorsements where influencers fail to disclose their partnerships, and thereby eroding consumer trust.

The market is also characterized by oversaturation, with a plethora of influencers vying for attention, which can desensitize consumers to promotional content and reduce engagement. Additionally, aligning influencers with a brand's target audience is crucial, as collaborations with mismatched influencers can lead to ineffective marketing strategies. Measuring the return on investment (ROI) from influencer campaigns poses another challenge, as brands often struggle to directly connect influencer performance to sales.

Cultural sensitivity is paramount in a diverse country like India, where a nuanced understanding of regional preferences is essential. Missteps in this regard can result in significant backlash against brands. Moreover, issues related to fake followers and inflated engagement metrics complicate the influencer landscape, leading brands to invest in partnerships that may not yield genuine value. The fast-paced nature of beauty trends necessitates that brands continuously adapt their strategies to stay relevant. Lastly, trust issues may arise when consumers perceive influencer partnerships as purely commercial, impacting their willingness to try endorsed products. Addressing these challenges is essential for brands aiming to effectively leverage influencer marketing to positively influence consumer buying behavior in the cosmetics market.

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Sr No.	Title of the paper & Author	Source	Findings	Research Gap
1.	Understanding The Impact Of Influencer On Brand Loyalty In Cosmetic Industry, Prakhar Manavat, Shivani Pandey, Manali Pandey, Dhruvinkumar Chauhan	International Research Journal of Modernization in Engineering Technology and Science (Mar 2022)	Influencers have a positive impact on brand loyalty of cosmetics products.	Only studied females as a sample
2.	Examining the Impact of Social Media Make-Up Influencers on Millennials. Sadiq, T., Waheed, A., & Noor, Z. (2023).	Global Digital & Print Media Review	Since millennials are the ones who are witnessing the change in the advertisements and have adapted to the modern ads but it was found that marketing through social media created awareness but not much information on whether it was converted into actual purchase	Focused only on few social media platform – tik tok, Instagram Different categories of influencers was not considered
3.	Influencer Marketing Yanjie Chen (2023)	Open Journal of Business and Management, 11, 2310-2320.	Analysis through examples of brands being successful and Failure campaigns of influencer marketing strategies. It was found that influencer marketing does impact the consumer behaviour especially on 2 attributes of consumer psychology i.e.	This study was purely based on qualitative analysis It did not study the long term effects of influencer marketing on consumer buying behaviour like

			conformity, authenticity.	customer loyalty. Area of study was Portugal
4.	Understanding influencer marketing: The role of congruence between influencers, products and consumers Belanche, D., Casaló, L. V., Flavián, M., & Ibáñez-Sánchez, S. (2021).	Journal of Business Research, 132, 186-195.	This article highlights on how a congruence psychological mechanism, leveraged in influencer marketing campaigns, can contribute to the success of this novel form of persuasive communication. The study confirms that when influencer–consumer congruence is fixed and high, high (low) influencer–product congruence leads to high (low) consumer–product congruence. Greater consumer–product congruence then generates more favorable attitudes toward the sponsored product, as well as higher intentions to purchase and recommend it	Area of the study is UK and women Studied only Instagram as a social media being used by the influencers The route for research might include different influencers' profiles, to establish categories or analogies according to the values and styles of the brands and possible collaborators.
5.	Influencer Marketing: A New Marketing Communication Trend Dr. Harishchandra Singh Rathod, Dr. Indra Meghrajani,	2023, Shodhsamhita UGC Care List 1	This study examines the idea of influencer marketing, its growth in India, and its increasing importance and scope. According to the outcomes of the study, various product categories, such as	Study is based on secondary data. It is descriptive research.

	Prof. Jignesh Vidhani		fashion, mobile, mobile accessories, movies, and restaurants, to name a few, have an impact on people through influencer marketing.	
6.	The Effect of Social Media Influencers, Word of Mouth, and Brand Awareness on Purchasing Decisions (Case Study of Influencer Titan Tyra and Secondate cosmetic products). Sherren, Helma Malini, Erna Listiana, Ahmad Shalahuddin, and Nur Afifah	IAR Journal of Business Management (2023)	This study reveals how social media influencers, product familiarity, and word-of-mouth all play a part in the purchasing decisions of Indonesians for Secondate cosmetics.	Area of study – Indonesia Has studied only one cosmetic brand i.e. secondate cosmetics
7.	Impact of Influencers on consumer behaviour regarding cosmetic products Monika Sehgal	Academia .edu.com	The study found that influencer expertise had major impact on consumers' inclination to buy. Because the product can only be touched, felt, or smelt, it is vital for a cosmetic brand to select a trustworthy influencer who can supply high-quality content on the product.	Area of Study - Haryana
8.	Impact Of Influencers On The Buying Behaviour And Attitude Of Individuals.	IJAR, 2019	The study showed that there exists a positive relationship between the consumer perception about the	Limited Sample size of 194 might not represent the

	Ayush Jain, Hrishi Shah, Ishita Tiwari And Nimisha Modi.		influencer and their purchase decision. It was also found out that gender acts as a moderating variable between consumer attitude and purchase intention. However, it was also revealed that source credibility and sponsored posts do not have significant impact on the buying intentions of individuals.	population effectively. The respondents' experiences were additionally a confining component, as they were prevalently young people with negligible pay. Subsequently, they may not be a decent indicator of purchasing power.
9.	Ruijie Shi, 2023. The Influence of Marketing Strategy on Consumer Behavior in The Cosmetics Industry.	Highlights in Business, Economics and Management, Volume 23.	The paper has analyzed how marketing strategies affect consumer behavior from the correlation between the two.	This study is descriptive in nature also does not focus on the social media advertising factor. Only generic marketing startegies have been considered
10.	Recent Trends of Cosmetics in India: A Review on Marketing Strategies and Consumer Behaviour, Abhisek Pal	International Journal of Management, 11(7), 2020	Analysis is performed with SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunities, and Threats) and 4P's (Product, Price, Promotion, and Place) variables	Social Media, influencer marketing components are not taken into consideration in the strategies used.

Research Gap

Since influencer marketing is a recent concept, were in very less this field is being explored with variety of factors. Also the research papers have considered women as their sample and have not considered male population in their sample. Cosmetics Industry is booming in India because the people have started paying more attention to their looks and personality and grooming aspects. So it is important for the companies to know the behaviour of consumers towards cosmetic products.

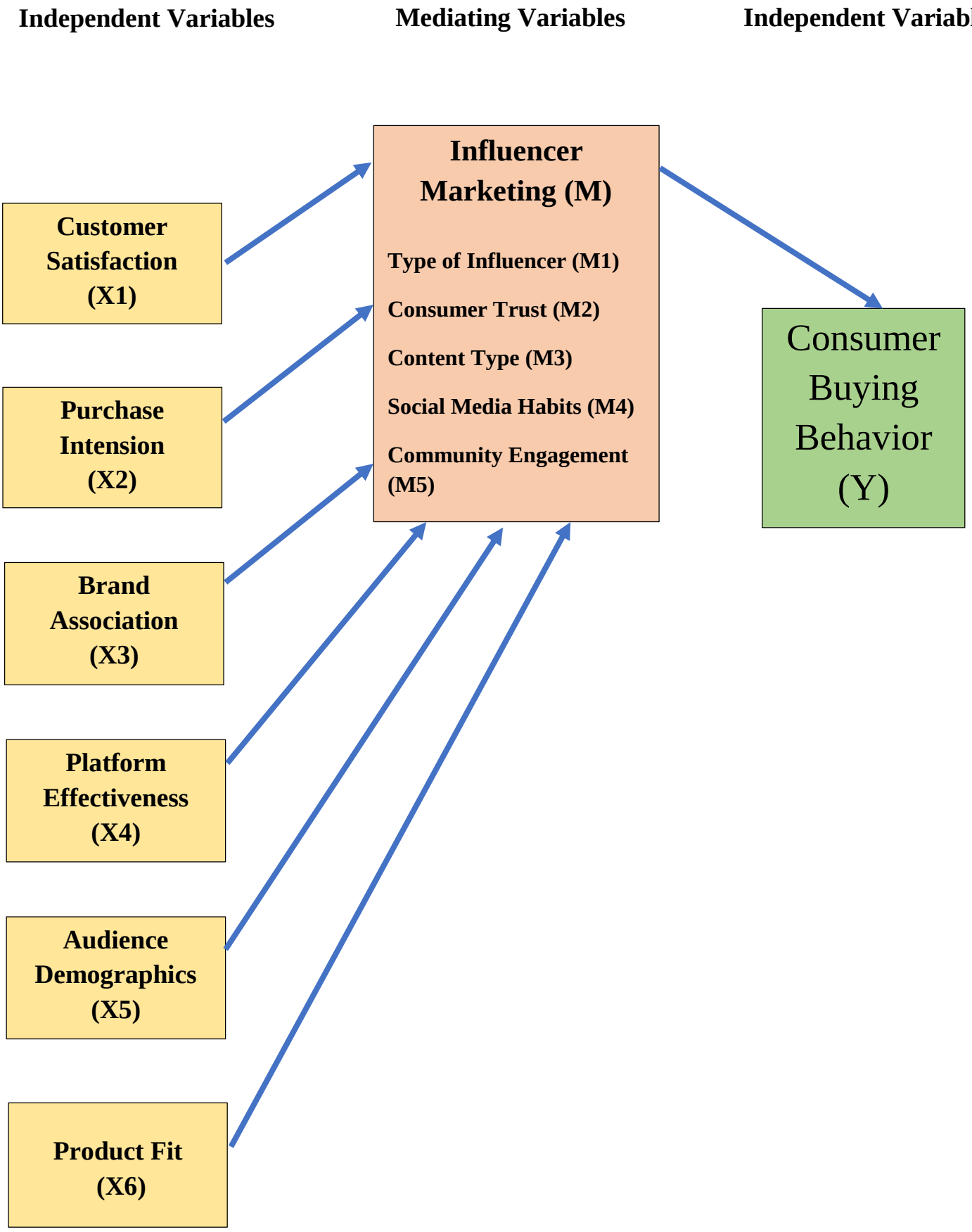
While influencer marketing is widely used, many brands lack detailed insights into *which types of influencers, content formats, and platforms are most effective for specific audience segments*. Existing studies often do not differentiate between the impact of influencer types (e.g., micro vs. macro-influencers) on brand loyalty and trust in cosmetics. This gap suggests that brands could benefit from more tailored approaches, as current knowledge may not fully capture the nuances of consumer preferences in the cosmetics sector.

There is limited understanding of *how influencer characteristics such as authenticity, expertise, and engagement style specifically influence consumer trust and buying behavior in cosmetics*. Influencers could benefit from insights into how these traits affect their impact on different demographics, enabling them to adjust their content strategies to resonate more deeply with their audience. This knowledge gap also extends to which content types—such as tutorials, reviews, or personal testimonials—are most effective for promoting cosmetics.

Most research has not fully explored how consumers perceive authenticity and trust in influencer marketing or how these perceptions impact their purchasing decisions.

limited research exists on *cultural and regional differences* in how consumers respond to influencer marketing in cosmetics, creating a need for studies that examine how these factors influence behavior across diverse consumer groups.

4. Theoretical Construct



Identifying key variables is essential to understand how different aspects of influencer marketing shape consumer decisions. This research typically includes:

Independent variables

Customer Satisfaction – Customer satisfaction is a multifaceted concept shaped by various elements that collectively influence a consumer's experience with a brand. When a product meets or exceeds expectations, it leads to positive experiences and heightened satisfaction. Consumer satisfaction levels post-purchase as influenced by the marketing message.

Purchase Intensions – The consumer's likelihood to buy the product, which can be influenced by the factors above and measured through surveys or behavioral analysis. Understanding the consumer's readiness to purchase, influenced by factors like the influencer's recommendation, product reviews, and marketing messages, is essential for gauging overall purchase intentions.

Brand Association – **Influencer credibility** is paramount; consumers are more likely to form positive associations with a brand if they perceive the influencer as trustworthy and knowledgeable. The **brand personality** embodied by the influencer plays a significant role. If the influencer's traits—such as being glamorous or relatable—align with the brand's identity, it strengthens emotional connections with consumers. Furthermore, how influencers demonstrate products directly impacts consumer perceptions; effective **product demonstrations** highlight product benefits and build associations of reliability and quality.

Platform Effectiveness – as an independent variable refers to the ability of various social media platforms (e.g., Instagram, YouTube, TikTok) to enhance the influence of influencer marketing on consumer buying behavior in the cosmetics industry. Platform effectiveness encompasses factors such as user engagement (likes, comments, shares), content presentation (video tutorials, reviews), audience targeting (demographic-specific reach), trust and credibility perception, and content reach through platform algorithms. Together, these factors determine how well a platform can amplify the impact of influencer marketing by fostering authentic connections, showcasing cosmetics effectively, and reaching the most relevant audiences, ultimately influencing consumer purchase decisions.

Audience Demographics – refers to the characteristics of the consumers engaging with influencer marketing content, particularly focusing on their influence on buying behavior within the cosmetics industry. Key demographic factors include age, gender, income level, education, and geographic location. These characteristics shape how consumers perceive, respond to, and are influenced by social media influencers in their purchasing decisions. Understanding these demographic nuances helps identify which audience segments are most influenced by influencer marketing and provides insights into tailoring marketing strategies to align with the characteristics of targeted consumer groups in the cosmetics market. Gender also plays a role, as different cosmetic products may appeal differently to various gender demographics.

Product Fit - refers to the alignment between the influencer, the promoted cosmetic product, and the audience's expectations. Product fit assesses how well the product matches the influencer's personal brand, style, and area of expertise, which can significantly impact the credibility and effectiveness of the endorsement. Product fit also involves how well the product suits the audience's preferences, needs, and lifestyle, as consumers are more likely to trust and consider purchasing products that feel relevant to their own identities and routines. High product fit increases consumer trust, makes the endorsement appear more authentic, and ultimately has a greater influence on purchase intent within the cosmetics market.

Mediating Variables

Type of influencer - mediates the relationship between influencer marketing and consumer buying behavior by affecting how consumers engage with, trust, and respond to promotional content, thereby shaping their purchase intentions within the cosmetics sector. This variable includes different categories of influencers based on follower count and niche, such as mega-influencers (celebrity-level followers), macro-influencers (large but non-celebrity following), micro-influencers (smaller, more niche following), and nano-influencers (very small but highly engaged communities). Each type of influencer has a unique influence on consumer behavior, as audiences perceive them differently in terms of relatability, trustworthiness, and expertise. For example, micro- and nano-influencers may be seen as more relatable and credible, especially for specialized cosmetic products, while mega-influencers may have a broader reach but potentially lower perceived authenticity.

Consumer trust refers to the confidence that consumers have in the influencer's recommendations, perceived honesty, and authenticity. When consumers trust an influencer, they are more likely to see the promoted cosmetic products as credible, which positively impacts their purchase intentions. Factors such as the influencer's transparency, expertise in cosmetics, and alignment with the consumer's values contribute to building trust. As a mediating variable, consumer trust affects the degree to which influencer marketing influences consumer behavior, meaning that higher levels of trust can strengthen the impact of influencer promotions, making consumers more receptive to product endorsements and increasing the likelihood of purchase within the cosmetics market.

Content type refers to the format and style of the influencer's posts, such as tutorials, reviews, unboxings, or testimonials, each of which can shape how consumers perceive and engage with the content. Different content types provide varying levels of information, demonstration, and personal opinion, which can influence consumer trust and interest in the cosmetic products being promoted. By mediating the impact of influencer marketing, content type affects how deeply consumers connect with the product and their subsequent willingness to make a purchase, ultimately guiding their buying decisions in the cosmetics market.

Social Media Habits - Social media habit refers to the frequency, duration, and patterns of consumer engagement on social media platforms, including how regularly they interact with influencer content, the types of content they prefer, and the platforms they use most often. Consumers with frequent and habitual social media usage are more likely to be exposed to and influenced by influencer marketing, as they are more familiar with influencers and may have higher engagement with their content. This repeated exposure can build familiarity and trust over time, making them more receptive to product recommendations. As a mediating variable, social media habit shapes the strength of influencer marketing's impact on consumer behavior, influencing how consumers perceive, evaluate, and ultimately decide to purchase cosmetic products promoted by influencers.

Community Engagement - Community engagement refers to the level of interaction and participation that consumers have within an influencer's online community, including activities such as liking, commenting, sharing content, and engaging in discussions with the influencer and other followers. High levels of community engagement indicate a strong, interactive relationship where consumers feel connected and invested, which can lead to higher trust in the influencer's recommendations. Engaged community members are more likely to view an

influencer’s opinions as credible and align their preferences with the influencer’s, increasing their willingness to consider or purchase endorsed cosmetic products. Community engagement strengthens the influence of influencer marketing by fostering a sense of belonging and shared interests, making consumers more receptive to product endorsements and, ultimately, influencing their buying behaviour within the cosmetics market.

Dependent Variable

Consumer buying behaviour - is the dependent variable that reflects the actions, decisions, and preferences of consumers regarding cosmetic purchases as influenced by influencer marketing. Consumer buying behavior encompasses various stages of the purchasing process, including awareness, interest, consideration, and ultimately, the decision to buy a product. Influencer marketing impacts this behavior by shaping consumers' perceptions of a brand or product, building trust, and generating emotional connections through authentic endorsements and relatable content. Changes in consumer buying behavior can manifest in ways such as increased brand loyalty, preference for specific cosmetic products endorsed by influencers, a higher likelihood of trying new products, and more frequent purchases. As the outcome of the study, consumer buying behavior provides insights into how influencer marketing drives consumers' decisions in the cosmetics market and the extent to which it affects their purchasing patterns.

By identifying and analyzing these variables, the study can better understand the dynamics of influencer marketing and its effectiveness in driving consumer behavior in the cosmetics market. This framework enables a focused investigation into the mechanisms of influence and the conditions under which influencer marketing is most impactful.

5. OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

1. To understand the impact of influencer marketing on consumer buying behaviour with reference to cosmetics
2. To identify key aspects of influencer marketing towards cosmetics
3. To analyse how influencer marketing determine consumer buying behaviour towards cosmetics
4. To examine the relationship between influencer marketing and consumer buying behaviour to cosmetics
5. To ascertain the challenges of influencer marketing in the purchase decision of consumer towards cosmetics
6. To develop a model and suggest strategies that can increase the purchase of the products through influencer marketing

6. HYPOTHESIS OF STUDY

Objective no. 1: To understand the impact of influencer marketing on consumer buying behaviour with reference to cosmetics

Null Hypothesis: (H1o): There is no significant impact of influencer marketing on consumer buying behaviour to cosmetics

Alternate Hypothesis ($H1_A$): There is significant impact of influencer marketing on consumer buying behaviour to cosmetics

Objective no. 2: To identify key aspects of influencer marketing towards cosmetics

Null Hypothesis: (H2o): The attributes of influencers and the platform used for influencer marketing does not impacts consumer buying behaviour

Alternate Hypothesis ($H2_A$): The attributes of influencers and the platform used for influencer marketing does impacts consumer buying behaviour

Objective no. 3: To analyse how influencer marketing determine consumer buying behaviour towards cosmetics

Null Hypothesis: (H3o): Brand association and purchase intension is not significantly improved or increased for the cosmetics companies using influencer marketing

Alternate Hypothesis (H3A): Brand association and purchase intension is significantly improved or increased for the cosmetics companies using influencer marketing

Objective no. 4: To examine the relationship between influencer marketing and consumer buying behaviour to cosmetics

Null Hypothesis: (H4o): There is no significant relationship between influencer marketing and consumer buying behaviour to cosmetics

Alternate Hypothesis (H4A): There is significant relationship between influencer marketing and consumer buying behaviour to cosmetics

Objective no. 5: To ascertain the challenges of influencer marketing in the purchase decision of consumer towards cosmetics

Null Hypothesis: (H5o): Cosmetic Companies using influencer marketing are not able to satisfy its customers from all demography

Alternate Hypothesis (H5A): Cosmetic Companies using influencer marketing are able to satisfy its customers from all demography

Objective no. 6: To develop a model and suggest strategies that can increase the purchase of the products through influencer marketing

Null Hypothesis: (H6o): The development of a model and the suggested strategies will not significantly help to increase the purchase of the cosmetics through influencer marketing

Alternate Hypothesis ($H6_A$): The development of a model and the suggested strategies will significantly help to increase the purchase of the cosmetics through influencer marketing

7. RESEARCH METHODLOGY

1) Research Design: Research Design is the blue print for the entire research process. Research design provides the information about the statistical tools and techniques to be used in conducting the research. The research design used in this study included both Exploratory research design and Descriptive Research Design.

The statistical tools like simple percentage method, Spearman rank correlation, Chi-square test, Reliability Analysis, Multiple Regression, Factor Analysis and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) will be used to derive conclusions for the study.

2) Data Collection: The data will be collected by using both primary data as well as secondary data.

a) Primary data collection method and structured questionnaire using survey method will be used and data collection techniques will assist to bring the real insight to understand the research problem at various levels.

Quantitative type of research will be applied by using the questionnaire, testing on a population of Cosmetic users in Mumbai.

Before conducting the actual research, pilot testing will be done by taking 15-20 consumers for the purpose of checking the reliability of the questionnaire. Hence, the primary data on dependent and independent variables will be collected.

b) Secondary data will be collected from various sources like websites, newspapers, reference books and journals.

5) Statistical Tools:

In the research the tools like, simple percentage method, Spearman rank correlation, Chi-square test, Reliability Analysis, Multiple Regression, Factor Analysis and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) will be used to test the equations of multiple regressions simultaneously.

The Simple Percentage Method has been employed, using percentages to determine the relationships between data series.

Spearman Rank Correlation is a non-parametric statistical tool used to assess the strength and direction of the relationship between two ranked variables. It evaluates how well the relationship between two variables can be described using a monotonic function.

Chi-square test also known as the goodness-of-fit test, is used to determine how the observed frequencies differ from the expected frequencies. When applied to two variables, the Chi-Square test assesses the symmetric association between them.

Factor Analysis is a multivariate analysis technique used to simultaneously evaluate multiple variables. It is employed for data reduction and data summarization.

Reliability Analysis has been conducted to assess the internal consistency of the variables. Factor Analysis, a multivariate analysis technique, has been utilized to evaluate the variables simultaneously.

Multiple Regression Analysis is used to evaluate the impact of independent variables on a dependent variable. This method enables researchers to measure the strength of the relationship between an outcome (the dependent variable) and several predictor variables, as well as to determine the significance of each predictor within the relationship, often accounting for the influence of other predictors statistically.

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) has been utilized to simultaneously test multiple regression equations.

Type of Industry	Cosmetics
Population	Consumers using cosmetics
Sample Size	1000 Respondents
Area of Study	Mumbai (East, West, North, South)
Method of Sampling	Quota Sampling, Convenience Sampling Method
Sampling Technique	Non Probability Sampling

8. SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

The significance of this study lies in its ability to provide valuable insights into how influencer marketing impacts consumer buying behavior in the cosmetics industry, a sector where visual appeal and brand trust are crucial. By understanding the dynamics between influencers and their followers, this research can help cosmetic brands refine their marketing strategies, targeting the right influencers, platforms, and content types to drive engagement, brand awareness, and ultimately sales.

This study is significant for both academics and industry professionals as it deepens the understanding of consumer psychology and behavior in response to influencer-driven campaigns. For academics, it contributes to the growing body of knowledge on digital marketing, particularly in the realm of social media and influencer engagement. For businesses, the findings can inform the development of more effective influencer marketing strategies, improving how cosmetics brands position their products in a competitive market.

Moreover, the study's exploration of variables such as platform effectiveness, product fit, and consumer trust offers actionable insights into how influencers can be strategically used to influence consumer preferences. It also highlights the role of demographics and social media habits, enabling brands to tailor their messaging to specific audience segments. The significance of this study is also enhanced by its practical implications for increasing brand loyalty, consumer engagement, and driving informed purchasing decisions in the fast-growing cosmetics market.

The study offers valuable insights for all stakeholders, including cosmetic brands, influencers, marketers, consumers, and academics.

1. Cosmetic Brands: For cosmetic brands, this study provides a deeper understanding of how influencer marketing can be used strategically to enhance brand image, build consumer trust, and drive sales. The findings can help brands identify the types of influencers and platforms that are most effective in reaching their target audience, leading to better allocation of marketing budgets and a higher return on investment.
2. Influencers: For influencers, the study sheds light on the critical role they play in shaping consumer perceptions and influencing purchase decisions. Insights from this research can help influencers understand the factors that build consumer trust, such as

content type, engagement style, and product fit. This can guide them to create more impactful and authentic content, fostering stronger connections with their audience and enhancing their reputation as credible brand ambassadors.

3. Marketers and Agencies: Marketers and advertising agencies can use the study's findings to design influencer marketing strategies that are data-driven and targeted. Understanding how demographics, social media habits, and trust affect consumer behavior allows marketers to tailor campaigns that resonate with specific audience segments. This helps in creating more personalized and effective marketing campaigns that can increase engagement and drive conversions.
4. Consumers: For consumers, the study promotes transparency by examining the factors that influence their buying decisions and the effectiveness of influencer marketing. Awareness of these factors helps consumers make more informed purchasing decisions, as they gain insights into the ways influencers and brands interact to shape their perceptions and choices.
5. Academics and Researchers: Academics and researchers in marketing and consumer behavior can benefit from the study's theoretical contributions, as it expands knowledge on the mechanisms through which influencer marketing impacts consumer choices, especially in the cosmetics sector. This research provides a foundation for future studies, offering frameworks and variables that can be explored in other industries or cultural contexts.

9. SCOPE OF STUDY

Influencer marketing is used by all the companies in different sectors because the business environment has become competitive in nature. This study will focus on cosmetic products where different categories like skin care, hair care, fragrances, colouring products, oral hygiene products etc. This study on the impact of influencer marketing on consumer buying behaviour with reference to cosmetics encompasses examining how various influencer marketing strategies and factors shape consumers' decisions, preferences, and purchasing actions within the cosmetics industry. This includes analysing key aspects such as the effectiveness of different social media platforms (e.g., Instagram, TikTok, YouTube), the role of consumer demographics (age, gender, income), and the alignment between influencers and promoted cosmetic products (product fit). Additionally, the study will assess mediating factors like consumer trust in influencers, type of influencer (macro, micro, nano), types of content (tutorials, reviews), social media habits, and community engagement to understand how these elements enhance or moderate the influence of marketing campaigns.

The scope is focused on consumer behaviour outcomes—such as brand awareness, purchase intentions, product loyalty, and frequency of purchase—specifically within the context of cosmetic products influenced by social media. Geographically, the study focus on specific region i.e. Mumbai target markets that are relevant to cosmetics consumers. Through this approach, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive view of the impact of influencer marketing strategies in the cosmetics industry, offering insights that can help brands optimize their campaigns to better target and engage their audiences.

10. LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

1) Rapidly changing social media trends can limit the applicability of findings over time, as platforms, algorithms, and influencer roles evolve frequently
2) Self-reported data from consumers regarding their purchasing decisions and social media habits can be subject to bias, as respondents may misrepresent their behaviors or intentions due to social desirability or recall errors.
3) The variability in influencer credibility and content quality, as differences in influencer expertise, authenticity, and engagement can lead to inconsistent results that may not fully capture all types of influencer-cosmetic brand dynamics.
4) Limited generalizability may arise if the study focuses on specific demographics, regions, or social media platforms, making it challenging to apply findings universally.
5) Influence of external factors such as brand reputation, product availability, and competitor marketing strategies may also impact consumer behavior, potentially confounding the effects of influencer marketing alone.
6) Measuring actual buying behavior (rather than intentions) can be difficult, as there may be a gap between consumer intent and action.

11. TENTATIVE CONCLUSION

Influencer marketing is a powerful tool that can significantly shape consumers' purchasing decisions and brand perceptions. Influencers, through authentic content and relatable endorsements, create a sense of trust and credibility that traditional advertising often lacks, especially in the visually-driven cosmetics sector where product demonstrations and reviews hold particular sway.

The impact of influencer marketing on consumer behavior is mediated by factors such as influencer type (macro, micro, or nano), the quality and relevance of content, and the strength of community engagement. Additionally, consumer demographics and social media habits play critical roles in determining how receptive consumers are to influencer-promoted products.

While influencer marketing has shown positive effects on consumer interest and purchase intentions, its impact may vary depending on platform effectiveness and product fit with the influencer’s persona. Overall, the findings suggest that a well-aligned influencer marketing strategy, which considers consumer preferences and platform dynamics, can enhance brand loyalty, increase product trial, and drive sales in the cosmetics market. However, the influence of external factors and changing social media trends indicates the need for ongoing research to maintain relevance and effectiveness.

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